

Policy Inform: People

July 2016

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Introduction

Wirral Plan:

The Wirral Plan: A 2020 Vision sets out a shared partnership vision to improve outcomes for Wirral residents. The Plan focuses on three key priority areas: People, Business and Environment.

The Wirral Plan People Priority states:

“Wirral is a place where the vulnerable are safe and protected, every child gets a good start in life and older residents are respected and valued.”

People Policy Briefing:

This policy briefing paper is intended to provide Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the latest position on emerging policy and legislative developments to support the committees work programme and future scrutiny work.

The following table outlines the timetable for the preparation and reporting of policy briefing papers:

Overview & Scrutiny Briefings	
July 2016	The first policy briefing will focus predominately on the Queen’s Speech, which will establish the Government's legislative programme for the parliamentary year ahead.
September 2016	The second policy briefing will be produced in September; it will provide an update on policy and legislation and will focus on Wirral Implications relevant to the government’s programme of legislation as outlined in the previous policy briefing.
January 2017	The third policy briefing will focus on the Autumn Statement and the Spending Review which sets out how Government money will be allocated. The policy briefing will provide an update on policy and legislation and will consider relevant implications for Wirral.
May 2017	The fourth policy briefing will focus upon the 2017 Chancellor of Exchequers Budget. The policy briefing will provide an update on policy and legislation and will consider relevant implications for Wirral.

The July policy briefing focuses on the policies and legislation that have emerged from the Queens speech, which was delivered on 18th May 2016. This policy briefing focuses specifically on policies and legislation relating to the People Priority.

The Committee may wish to identify specific policy areas to focus upon which are in line with the Committee's work programme. Detailed briefing papers can be prepared for these subject matters at the request of the Committee which would be in addition to the regular policy briefing papers outlined above.

Queen's Speech 2016- Designation to Overview and Scrutiny Committees

On Wednesday 18th May 2016, the Queens Speech was delivered, outlining the Government's programme of legislation and policies for the coming year. Below is a list of each individual Bill which will have implications for local government that was announced during the speech, including those Bills carried over from the 2015-16 session. The list identifies the Overview and Scrutiny committee with whose remit the legislation most closely aligns:

Legislative Plans	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Neighbourhood Planning and Infrastructure Bill	Business and Environment
Bus Services Bill	Business
Local Growth and Jobs Bill	Business
Digital Economy Bill	Business
Modern Transport Bill	Business
High Speed Rail Bill	Business
Better Markets Bill	Business
Children and Social Work Bill	People
Education for All Bill	People
Higher Education and Research Bill	People
National Citizen Service Bill	People
Finance Bill	People and Business
Policing and Crime Bill	People and Environment
Soft Drinks Industry Levy	People and Environment
Lifetime Savings Bill	People and Environment
Prison and Courts Reform Bill	Environment
Investigatory Powers Bill	Environment

Additional Bills that have been announced are outlined below. These will be monitored in relation to any emerging implications for Local Government and reported to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee as appropriate.

Additional Legislative Plans
Wales Bill
Bill of Rights
Criminal Finances Bill
Counter-Extremism and Safeguarding Bill
Cultural Property (Armed Conflicts) Bill

Small Charitable Donations Bill
NHS (Overseas Visitors Charging) Bill

The Bills relevant to the People priority are discussed in further detail in this paper.

Queen's Speech 2016- Emerging and Ongoing Legislation

Children and Social Work Bill

"Children can be adopted by new families without delay, improve the standard of social work and opportunities for young people in care in England."

Synopsis and Key Points:

- **Synopsis:**

- The purpose of the Children and Social Work Bill is to tackle state failure and transform the outcomes of children in care. The Bill will ensure that children can be adopted by new families without delay, and improve the standard of social work and opportunities for young people in care in England.

- **Key Points:**

- **Looked-after children and care leavers:**

- Standards will be set for how local authorities should act as a 'corporate parent' to support children in care and as they move into adult life.
- A new 'Care Leavers Covenant', underpinned by statutory duties, to make sure local authorities set out clearly the entitlements for care leavers – including housing, jobs and healthcare.
- Local authorities will be required to consult on and publish a 'local offer' for care leavers in their area.
- The right to a Personal Adviser will be extended to all care leavers up to the age of 25, not just those who are in education or training.

- **Adoption:**

- Changes will be made to the considerations that courts must take into account in adoption decisions, tipping the balance in favour of permanent adoption where that is the right thing for the child.
- A duty will be placed on local authorities and schools to promote educational achievement for adopted children and those in the long-term kinship care.
- A new specialist regulator will be set up for the profession with a clear focus on driving improvement and introducing more demanding professional standards.

- **Children's Safeguarding:**

- Measures will be introduced to improve the sharing of learning from serious child safeguarding cases.
- Support for innovation in children's social care by allowing local authorities to pilot new, innovative approaches.

Education for All Bill

“Educational excellence in all schools, giving every child the best start in life.”

Synopsis and Key Points:

- **Synopsis:**

- The Education for All Bill will deliver the next phase of the transformation of education, extending the principles of freedom and accountability across the country so that excellence is encouraged everywhere and every child is given the best start in life.

- **Key Points:**

- The Bill will deliver the vision that will be set out in the forthcoming Skills Plan through ambitious reform to technical education. These changes will focus on closing the major productivity gap between our economy and other leading economies.
- New laws will be introduced to expand the academies programme to convert schools in under-performing and unviable local authorities.
- Provisions will be introduced to speed up the academy conversion process.
- A new funding formula will deliver fair funding for every school and pupil in the country.
- Measures will be introduced to make schools accountable for the provision and progress of excluded pupils so that those currently let down by the system are given an excellent education.

Higher Education and Research Bill

“Ensure that more people have the opportunity to further their education”.

Synopsis and Key Points:

- **Synopsis:**

- The Higher Education and Research Bill will deliver the biggest supply-side reforms to the higher education sector for a quarter of a century, so that more universities are opened and more young people – from all backgrounds – are given the chance to succeed.

- **Key Points:**

- The Bill will include measures to make it easier for new high quality universities to open, boosting competition to improve teaching quality.
- A reform of university funding will link funding for universities to the quality of teaching rather than student numbers, with graduate employment prospects tracked so students can be sure they are getting value for money.
- New requirements will be introduced on all universities to publish detailed information about application, offer and progression rates, broken down by ethnicity, gender and socio-economic background. This will shine a spotlight on universities that need to go further and faster on social mobility and spur further action to ensure all institutions reach out to disadvantaged groups.

Further Detail:

- The Higher Education and Research Bill will enact the reforms in the white paper, ‘Success as a Knowledge Economy’, published on 16 May 2016.
- The Bill will also establish the Office for Students (OFS) as the single regulator for the higher education sector. The OFS will put student choice, teaching quality and social mobility at the top of the agenda in higher education. The Bill will enable the OFS to take swift, effective regulatory action where new HE providers are failing to deliver high quality education.
- Through this Bill it is expected that the UK’s position as a world-leader on the research and innovation stage will be cemented and value for money, from the government’s investment of over £6 billion per annum in research and innovation, will be maximised.

National Citizen Service Bill

“National Citizen Service will be placed on a permanent statutory footing.”

Synopsis and Key Points:

- **Synopsis:**

- This National Citizen Service Bill will see the expansion of the government’s hugely successful National Citizen Service so more young people can mix with people of other backgrounds, and learn what it means to serve their community.

- **Key points:**

- The Bill will introduce a new statutory framework to deliver the programme, which will benefit from a £1.2 billion cash injection.
- A new duty will be placed on all secondary schools (including academies, sixth-form colleges and independent schools) and local authorities to promote the scheme to all young people and their parents.
- A duty will be placed on relevant Secretaries of State to report annually on how they have promoted the NCS.

Finance Bill

Synopsis and Key Points:

- **Synopsis:**

- The purpose of the Finance Bill is to introduce measures to provide opportunity for families who work hard and save; back British businesses; and tackle multinational tax avoidance.

- **Key points:**

- The personal allowance will be increased to £11,500 and the higher rate threshold to £45,000.
- A new personal savings allowance will be introduced so that 95% of taxpayers will pay no tax on the first £1,000 of savings income if they are a basic rate taxpayer.
- Corporation tax will be cut to 17% in 2020.
- Radical action will be taken on the oil and gas tax regime to safeguard jobs and encourage investment.
- New rules will be introduced to address hybrid mismatch arrangements and ensure payments for the use of intellectual property based overseas are subject to tax.
- New measures will ensure that profits from the development of UK property are always subject to UK tax.

Further Detail:

- The Finance Bill was introduced into Parliament on 24 March 2016.

Policing and Crime Bill

“Strengthen the capability and accountability of the police service in England and Wales.”

Synopsis and Key Points:

- **Synopsis:**

- The Policing and Crime Bill will carry over from the previous Parliamentary session. The Bill will continue the reform of policing, reforming out-of-date complaints and disciplinary procedures, and increasing public confidence in the police.

- **Key Points:**

- The Bill will include a new duty on all 3 emergency services to collaborate, to improve efficiency and effectiveness.
- New authority will enable Chief Officers to designate wider powers on police staff and volunteers, so they can make best use of their workforce.
- The use of police cells as places of safety for under-18 year-olds in a mental health crisis will be banned.
- A stronger oversight role will be introduced for PCCs over local complaints, giving them an explicit responsibility for ensuring the effective and efficient delivery of the local police complaints system, and extending HM Inspector of Constabulary’s remit to enable it to inspect private contractors.
- Both the current police complaints system and police disciplinary system are too complex and lack transparency. The Bill would simplify the complaints system and make reforms to the disciplinary regime to increase transparency and independence.

Further Detail:

- The Policing and Crime Bill was given a formal First and Second reading (no debate) on Thursday 19 May 2016 to reintroduce it in the 2016-17 session of Parliament. The Bill will be restarted at the point it reached in the last session.

Soft Drinks Industry Levy

“A soft drinks industry levy to help tackle childhood obesity.”

Synopsis and Key Points:

- **Synopsis:**

- A new soft drinks industry levy will be introduced in the Finance Bill 2017 targeted at producers and importers of soft drinks that contain added sugar from April 2018.

- **Key points:**

- The legislation will encourage companies to reformulate by reducing the amount of added sugar in the drinks they sell, moving consumers towards lower sugar alternatives. Under this levy, if producers change their behaviour, they will pay less tax.

Revenue from the levy will be invested to:

- Double the primary school PE and sport premium from £160 million per year to £320 million per year from September 2017 to help schools support healthier and more active lifestyles.
- Provide up to £285 million a year to give 25% of secondary schools increased opportunity to extend their school day to offer a wider range of activities for pupils, including more sport.
- Provide £10 million funding a year to expand breakfast clubs in up to 1,600 schools starting from September 2017.

Further Detail:

- This levy is the first step in this Government’s comprehensive national childhood obesity strategy that will be published in full later this year. A consultation will be held in due course on the technical details of the tax.

Lifetime Savings Bill

“Help the lowest-income families save, through a new Help to Save scheme, and to create a Lifetime ISA to help young people save for the long-term.”

Synopsis and Key Points:

- **Synopsis:**

- The Lifetime Savings Bill will help people to save and make plans for the future, and build the financial resilience and security of people across the country – especially the young and those on low incomes.

- **Key Points:**

- The Bill will enable the Government to create a new Help to Save scheme, which will help those from low incomes build up their savings.
- Under the Help to Save scheme, workers in receipt of working tax credits or Universal Credit who save up to £50 a month will receive a Government bonus of 50% – to a maximum of £600 – after two years.
- It will also enable the Government to create a new Lifetime ISA for adults under 40, with a Government top up bonus of 25% on all savings up to £4,000 a year.
- Lifetime ISA account holders could access some or all their funds to buy their first home (worth up to £450,000), or from age 60 without charge.

Sources

Queens Speech - Emerging and Ongoing Legislation

[Queen's Speech 2016: what it means for you, Government website, 18th May 2016](#) – *Outlines the Bills announced in the Queens Speech 2016*

[Queen's Speech: 18th May 2016, LGiU, 18th May 2016](#) – *An explanation of the Bills announced in the Queens Speech 2016*

[Queens Speech 2016: background briefing notes, Government website, 18th May 2016](#) – *More detailed briefing notes on the Bills announced in the Queen's Speech 2016*

NCB Member Briefing: Budget 2016, NCB, May 2016 – *Outlines content of the Queen's Speech relevant to children and young people*

Higher Education and Research Bill

[Higher Education and Research Bill to deliver choice and opportunity for students, Government website, 19th May 2016](#) – *Outlines key points of the Higher Education and Research Bill*

Finance Bill

[Finance Bill 2016 legislates new tax changes, Government website, 24th March 2016](#) – *Brief outline and key points of the Finance Bill*

Policy Developments

[Briefing: DfE policy: Adoption: a vision for change](#)

The DfE has published a policy paper, 'Adoption: A vision for change', which sets out the government's plans for adoption reform, as part of its overarching vision for transforming the quality of children's social care services by 2020.

Key objectives outlined in the paper involve reversing the recent marked decline in the number of adoptions, and addressing concerns that some children still wait too long for adoption.

Further proposals aim to improve the effectiveness of the system through the introduction of Regional Adoption Agencies; improve the professional skills and knowledge of the workforce; provide more high quality adoption support; and introduce new measures to embed further strong performance management and accountability.

Source: [Martin Rogers, Briefing: DfE policy: Adoption: a vision for change, LGiU, 7th April 2016](#)

[Briefing: What are the opportunities and threats for further savings in adult social care?](#)

This report, published by the Institute of Public Care at Oxford Brookes University, reflects the personal views of Professor John Bolton and draws on three main sources:

- Work commissioned by the Department of Health from six councils to contribute to last year's Comprehensive Spending Review
- Findings from the LGA's adult social care efficiency programme
- John Bolton's work with councils to identify savings.

The LGA and many other health and care organisations now point to the extreme pressure council's face, and the potential that essential services will need to be cut. The report considers how savings have previously been made and investigates the potential for continuing to make savings in the future. It is concluded that future financial challenges are significant, and opportunities for further savings are very limited.

Source: [Christine Heron, Briefing: What are the opportunities and threats for further savings in adult social care?, LGiU, 13th April 2016](#)

Briefing: Schools causing concern: April 2016 DfE guidance

The DfE has published new statutory guidance for local authorities on schools causing concern, and intervening in failing, underperforming and coasting schools.

The new guidance reflects changes under the Education and Adoption Act 2016 giving new intervention powers to the Secretary of State and extending the types of maintained schools eligible for intervention to include coasting schools.

Regional Schools Commissioners will be expected to follow the document as guidance for how they will exercise the Secretary of State's powers of intervention in maintained schools causing concern and for how they will take formal action in academies causing concern. The guidance is effective from 18 April 2016.

Source: [Martin Rogers, Briefing: Schools causing concern: April 2016 DfE guidance, LGiU, 15th April 2016](#)

Briefing: Baseline Assessment comparability study and DfE response

The government has announced, through a press release, the dropping of its planned reception to baseline Key Stage 2 progress measure, and a review of baseline assessment in reception year at primary school.

Schools will have the option to continue to use the baseline assessment in the 2016/17 academic year, with the government promising that the outcome will not be used for accountability purposes. Key Stage 1 will contribute to be used as the starting point from which to measure progress to Key Stage 2. The Government remains committed to assessment as a key part of the education system. The press release promises that 'over the coming months we will be considering options for improving assessment arrangements in reception beyond 2016 to 2017 and will make an announcement in due course.

Source: [Andrew Crompton, Briefing: Baseline Assessment comparability study and DfE response, LGiU, 21st June 2016](#)

Briefing: DfE revised guidance on maintained school organisation

On the 28th January 2014, the DfE has published three new guidance documents on the 'School organisation: local authority maintained schools' website:

- Making ‘prescribed alterations’ to local authority maintained schools
- Deciding prescribed alteration and established and discontinuance proposals
- Opening and closing local authority maintained schools

Since there are no substantial changes to relevant primary or secondary legislation that bear directly on the subject matter, the legal position remains the same.

Source: [Alan Parker, DfE revised guidance on maintained school organisation, LGiU, 21st June 2016](#)

Briefing: DfE consultation; the thirty hours free child care entitlement

A Conservative manifesto commitment at the last general elections committed the incoming government to increase the free childcare hours for 3 and 4 year-olds with working parents from 15 hours per week to 30 hours per week. The Childcare Act 2016 implements this commitment and requires local authority to publish information about the provision of childcare in their area.

The government has announced that it will invest an extra £1 billion into early years and childcare, with a new funding formula introduced in 2017-18. As the same time it has reviewed how the current mechanisms work, and want to introduce greater flexibility into the market place. The DfE’s consultation following these initially reviews and considered the practicalities of extending childcare to 30 hours for three and four year olds from September 2017.

Source: [Andrew Crompton, Briefing: DfE consultation; the thirty hours free child care entitlement, LGiU, 21st June 2016](#)

Briefing: Mental Health and Wellbeing looked after children report: Commons Education Committee

On the 18th April 2016, the House of Commons Education Committee has published Mental Health and Wellbeing of Looked-After Children. It followed a verity of other reports on children’s mental health including a recent one by the House of Common’s Youth Committee.

The report considers:

- The boundary between health, education and social services making recommendations for changes to statutory guidance
- The way children’s mental health services are managed at a local level

- The way mental health needs of looked after children are assessed and the way in which these children and young people can best be supported through all the agencies that work with them, including schools

Source: [Andrew Crompton, Mental health and well-being of looked after children report: Commons Education Committee, LGiU, 21st June 2016](#)

Briefing: NAO – Training new teachers

The NAO report emphasises the importance of teachers in relation to the total money spent in England’s schools. In 2014, 23, 900 newly qualified teachers entered the workforce of 455, 00 teachers. The cost to central government and schools of training new teachers is around £700 million annually.

This report assess whether the DfE’s arrangements for training new teachers represent value for money, given its objectives of having sufficient teachers of the right quality, and examines:

- The DfE’s understanding of the number of new teachers needed by English schools;
- The DfE’s arrangements for securing sufficient new teachers of the right quality;
- How efficiently the DfE manages the changing market of providers

Source: [Kathy Baker, Briefing: NAO – training new teachers, LGiU, 21st June 2016](#)

Briefing: NAO – entitlement to free early education and childcare

In September 2010, the DfE introduced entitlement to 15 hours of free childcare per week for 38 weeks each for all 3 and 4 year olds in England. In 2013, this was extended to include 2 year-olds from disadvantaged families if their parents qualify for benefits such as Income Support or income-based Jobseekers Allowance. By providing free childcare the report emphasises that *‘the Department aims to support children’s development, ensure children are ready for school and help parents manage childcare costs and working patterns...close the gap between the later educational achievement of disadvantaged children and their peers’*.

In 2015, the DfE announced plans to increase some family’s entitlement to free childcare. The pilot of the new entitlement is scheduled from September 2016, and will implement it fully from September 2017. The NAO report evaluates how well the DfE has implemented its early years policies to date, working with others and including:

- Whether it is meeting its objectives for take-up and the quality of childcare;
- How effectively local authorities are managing the childcare market;
- The relationship between available funding and providers’ costs;

- The challenges the DfE will face in extending the entitlement to 30 hours.

Source: [Kathy Baker, Briefing: NAO – entitlement to free early education and childcare, LGiU, 21st June 2016](#)

Briefing: Early education and childcare cost: DfE economic assessment

The Department of Education analysis ‘Review of childcare cost: An economic assessment of the early education and childcare market providers’ cost’ provides an overview of the state of the childcare market and supported the setting of the government funded rate for the free childcare entitlement.

The DfE concludes that there is scope for efficiencies in the staffing model adopted by the market, and specifically by increasing the staff-to-child ratios, while some providers would benefit from economies of scale and scope. While different providers have different cost bases, there was greater variation between providers of the same type depending on the business practices adopted, geography, size of setting etc. The review concludes that there is a “strong evidence case” for varying government funding rates between areas, and for providers to become more efficient in their practice.

Source: [Mark Upton, Briefing: Early education and childcare cost: DfE economic assessment, LGiU, 21st June 2016](#)

Briefing: Early evaluation of the integrated care and support: final report

The Policy Innovation Researcher Unit (PIRU) at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine has finished its first stage evaluation of the integrated pioneer programme. The evaluation describes the type of activity pioneers are involved in, the barrier they are facing and the solution they are identifying. PIRU concludes that it is too early to expect major progress from the pioneers but the challenges of new major policy initiatives and the financial pressures on health and care could hinder rapid progress in future.

Source: [Christine Heron, Briefing: Early evaluation of the integrated care and support pioneers programme: final report, LGiU, 21st June 2016](#)

Briefing: Reducing teachers workload update

In October 2014, the DfE launched its Workload Challenge with a month-long survey asking teachers for their view on how to reduce unnecessary workload. More than 44,000 people responded. The areas of inquiry were:

- Unnecessary or unproductive tasks
- Strategies that work in schools to manage workload
- What the Government and schools can do to minimise workload

The challenge reveals that the three areas identified by teachers as the key offenders in leading to unnecessary workload were marking, planning and data managing. Three review groups were set up to make recommendations about reducing workload in these areas. In the interim and in response to the findings of the Workload Challenge, the Government had already committed itself to:

- Giving schools more time to prepare for any government changes made to accountability, the curriculum or qualifications;
- Sharing examples of successful practices schools have used to deal with teaching tasks that can cause unnecessary workload;
- Tracking teacher workload by running a large-scale survey every two years. (A representative sample of schools was invited to take part in the first survey in February 2016 and the results will be published later in the year).

Source: [Kathy Baker, Briefing: Reducing teachers workload update, LGiU, 21st June 2016](#)
